

Application No. 10/075,981
Docket No. DP-302458
Amendment dated August 15, 2003
Reply to Office Action of May 15, 2003

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-20 of the above-identified US Patent Application, with the result that independent claim 1 and its dependent claim 11 were rejected under 35 USC §102, independent claim 13 and its dependent claims 14-20 were allowed, and claims 2-10 and 12 (which depend from claim 1) were deemed to recite allowable subject matter. In response, Applicants have amended the specification and claims as set forth above. More particularly:

The "BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION" has been amended to be more consistent with claim 1, whereby the phrases "gel matrix" and "silicone gel matrix" have been replaced with "polymer matrix material."

Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of its dependent claim 8, pursuant to the Examiner's conclusion that claim 8 (which depends from claim 1) recites allowable subject matter. As such, independent claim 1 and its remaining dependent claims are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record.

Dependent claims 2 and 9 have each been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim 1, pursuant to the Examiner's conclusion that claims 2 and 9 recite allowable subject matter. As such, claims 2 and 9 and their respective dependent claims are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record.

Dependent claim 8 has been amended to depend from claim 2 in view of its limitations being incorporated into its original parent claim 1.

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Applicants believe that the above amendments do not present new matter.

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-20 are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments.

Should the Examiner have any questions with respect to any matter now of record, Applicants' representative may be reached at (219) 462-4999.

Respectfully submitted,

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